



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie: Town Hall to Gather Feedback From Business Owners on NYS MWBE Program

BRIAN DWYER June 7, 2019

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State Senator Patty Ritchie is encouraging local business owners to share feedback on the state's Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program at a special town hall meeting taking place on June 11<sup>th</sup> in Watertown.

Hosted by Empire State Development, the meeting will provide business owners and other stakeholders with an opportunity to talk directly with MWBE program officials about their

experiences with the program and how it has worked in their community. Attendees will also be able to share thoughts on how the state can make it easier for businesses to participate. The June 11<sup>th</sup> event will take place at Jefferson Community College at 2:00 PM in Room 6-002, Jules Center.

In April, Senator Ritchie wrote to Empire State Development to urge the agency to host local events aimed at helping more businesses enroll in the program, as well as allowing business owners to offer feedback on how the program can be improved.

“In recent years I have heard from a number of local businesses looking to expand by taking part in the state’s MWBE program—however, many have run into roadblocks along the way,” said Senator Patty Ritchie.

“This is an opportunity for those business owners to share their thoughts with program officials on how the state can better support their efforts to grow. If you are a local business owner, I encourage you to attend this town hall to share your feedback.”

Last year, Senator Ritchie—who served as co-chair of the Senate’s MWBE Working Group—co-hosted a series of hearings across New York State that allowed business owners, industry leaders and union representatives to share their experiences with the program and offer suggestions for its improvement.

Business owners and other stakeholders who plan to attend the June 11<sup>th</sup> town hall meeting are asked to RSVP by emailing Amanda Ward at [Amanda.Ward@esd.ny.gov](mailto:Amanda.Ward@esd.ny.gov).